



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Transit
Administration**

Deputy Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

JUN 12 2014

Dear Colleague:

I write to address an urgent safety concern stemming from the ongoing investigation into a collision and derailment that occurred on the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Blue Line on Monday, March 24, 2014. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is issuing [*Safety Advisory 14-2, Verification of Safe Rail Vehicle Stopping Distances at Terminal Stations.*](#)

In this advisory, FTA urges the nation's rail transit systems to:

- ensure that enough space is available for trains in the course of emergency braking to stop in terminal stations before colliding with bumper posts or other end-of-the-line equipment;
- immediately evaluate the performance of automatic signals and trip stops under the actual operating speeds and conditions present for each terminal station, as a means of protecting rail transit passengers and employees; and
- undertake an analysis to evaluate and resolve any deficiencies if insufficient stopping space is identified.

Over time, changes made to authorized train speeds, the design or layout of the terminal station, or the placement of signals and trip stops can affect the minimum safe stopping distance required for trains in emergency braking. Speed restrictions, re-configuring automatic signals and trip stops, modifying the placement and performance of bumping posts and installations, and recalculating safe braking rates are all steps that rail transit agencies can take to address this critical safety concern.

The FTA is directing State Safety Oversight (SSO) agencies to confirm the rail transit agencies' actions to verify rail vehicle safe stopping distances in terminal stations in accordance with this safety advisory, and approve corrective actions to be implemented by the rail transit agency by 60 days after publication in the Federal Register. Additionally, FTA is directing SSO agencies to provide a summary of actions taken by each rail transit agency in the next Annual SSO Program Report.

I will keep you updated as to any formal recommendations that the National Transportation Safety Board may issue to FTA on this subject.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this advisory and your continued commitment to safety. If you or your staff has questions regarding this safety advisory, please contact Thomas Littleton, Associate Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight at 202-366-1783, or you can contact me directly at 202-366-4040.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Therese W. McMillan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Therese W. McMillan